

CLAIMS

I claim;

1. A display unit for a vehicle, the display unit including; image display means for producing an image, and an optical system for permitting viewing of the image by a driver of the vehicle at a comfortable distance, wherein the optical system includes a reflecting surface and an optical prism having focusing power, the reflecting surface being interposed between the image display means and a first transmitting face of the optical prism and inclined with respect thereto to reflect the image onto said first face, whereupon the image is reflected from a second reflecting face of the optical prism towards and through a third transmitting face of the optical prism for viewing by the driver.
2. A display unit according to claim 1 in which the image display comprises a liquid crystal display panel and a light source.
3. A display unit according to claim 1 in which the reflecting surface is a silvered mirror.
4. A display unit according to claim 1 in which the optical prism is made from glass.
5. A display unit according to claim 1 in which the optical prism is made from acrylic material.
6. A display unit according to claim 1 in which the second face of the optical prism is provided with a reflective coating.
7. A display unit according to claim 1 in which the first and third faces of the optical prism are convex and the second face is plane.

8. A display unit according to claim 1 in which the distance from the image display to the optical prism and the focussing power of the optical prism is arranged, so that the image viewed by the driver appears to be at a distance beyond the vehicle's windscreen and at a comfortable viewing distance from the driver's eye.
9. A display unit according to claim 1 in which the optical prism is adapted to be moveable between a stored position and a deployed position.
10. A display unit according to claim 9 in which the optical prism is adapted to be moveable between a stored position and a first deployed position where only an upper portion of the prism is visible to the driver.
11. A display unit according to claim 9 in which the optical prism is adapted to be moveable between a stored position and a second deployed position where substantially the whole of the prism is visible to the driver.
12. A display unit according to claim 9 and further incorporating a framework for supporting the optical prism wherein the optical prism is moveable between stowed and deployed positions within guide channels incorporated in said framework.
13. A display unit according to claim 1 in which the optical prism is adapted to be adjustable in order to provide an optimum viewing angle for the driver of the vehicle.
14. A display unit according to claim 12 wherein a pivotal connection is provided between the optical prism and the supporting framework.
15. A display unit according to claim 13 wherein a pivotal connection is provided between the optical prism and a supporting framework.